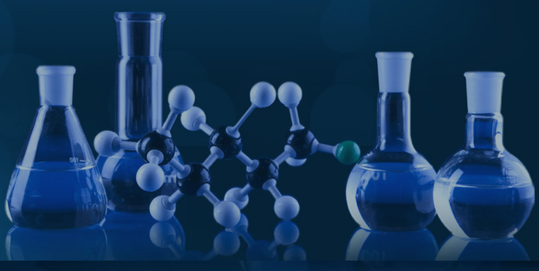

Menopause – Additional Information

Menopause - Additional Information

Some women have no symptoms during menopause. Others are plagued by fatigue, depression, hot flashes, vaginal dryness and other complaints. Nutritional balancing programs can help minimize the effects associated with menopause and improve overall health. The latter is important as menopausal symptoms are indicators of impaired health.

Sluggish Metabolism And Menopause

At menopause the adrenal glands should produce sufficient estrogen and progesterone to avoid menopausal symptoms. However, in many women the adrenal glands are depleted. When the ovaries stop producing hormones, the adrenal glands do not produce enough to make up the difference and symptoms occur. In addition to physical symptoms, depression, crying and other emotional symptoms can be traced to adrenal insufficiency.

The most important part of the solution to menopausal symptoms is to improve the activity of the adrenal glands. This should always be the first goal before one resorts to replacement hormones, herbs, soy products or other treatments.

Liver Toxicity And Estrogen

Estrogen must be detoxified in the liver. In slow metabolizers, the liver is often congested. If estrogen is not properly detoxified, an excess remains in the blood. This can make an individual 'estrogen dominant' even though one is not producing high amounts of estrogen. This can also ruin the accuracy of saliva hormone tests.

Certain pesticides and other chemicals, including some found in soy, mimic the effects of estrogen. At times this can be of benefit. At others it is decidedly harmful. Chemicals may also cause an individual to become estrogen dominant and skew tests for estrogen although one is not producing much estrogen.

Menopause Protocol

For menopausal symptoms, one needs to improve the diet first. Eat organically grown food. Avoid all sugar-containing products, fruit juices, and reduce fruit to no more than one piece of juicy fruit per day. Avoid wheat, a common food that many individuals are allergic to. The same goes for cow's milk dairy products. Also avoid chemical additives found in many foods.

Slow metabolizers need to eat protein with each meal, and some animal protein daily. Increase the amount of vegetables, including vegetables at two meals daily. Anyone with menopausal symptoms needs nine hours of sleep daily. This helps rejuvenate the adrenals and facilitates liver detoxification.

The recommended supplement programs for slow oxidizers are very helpful to enhance adrenal hormone production and assist liver detoxification. One may wish to add black radish root, ox bile and pancreatin or milk thistle to the recommended supplement program.

If this is not sufficient to stop hot flashes within several months, add the mineral boron to the program. Boron helps natural hormone production. Improving zinc status will reduce copper which will tend to boost progesterone in relation to estrogen. Adding evening primrose oil may also help. It is anti-inflammatory and reduces estrogen effects in relation to progesterone.

In this manner, most menopausal symptoms can be easily controlled. Only if these methods are not enough should one consider symptomatic treatment such as progesterone cream or herbal supplements.

The Sodium/potassium Ratio And Hormones

If symptomatic treatment is needed, hair analysis offers a way to reduce the guesswork involved. Blood and saliva tests for hormones are also available. However, most doctors agree these are sometimes unreliable. Experimentation may be necessary.

The sodium/potassium ratio is often related to the ratio of estrogen to progesterone. Sodium roughly corresponds to estrogen and potassium to progesterone. Such being the case, when one exhibits a high sodium/potassium ratio, a woman is more likely to need progesterone and when the sodium/potassium ratio is low, estrogen is more often needed.

Return Of Menstruation On Nutrition Programs

Occasionally, menstrual periods begin again when a menopausal woman undertakes a nutritional balancing program. This is a positive sign. Menopause occurs when hormones levels decrease, indicating that child-bearing is no longer healthful. In this sense, menopause is a pathological state. A properly designed nutrition program can restore health to such an extent that child-bearing becomes safe.

In these instances, the menstrual period will return. This happens more frequently to women who experience menopause at a young age, but may occur at any age.

Soy Products

Some health authorities recommend eating genisten and other phytochemicals found in soy as treatment for menopausal symptoms. We do not recommend soy, except for occasional tofu and tempeh, miso or natto. The harmful qualities of soy have been minimized in these traditional fermented soy products. Soy powders and other soy products contain enzyme inhibitors, chemical processing residues and thyroid inhibitors. They are best avoided.

Hormone Replacement Therapy

Recent medical studies demonstrate that hormone replacement with Premarin, progestins and other forms of hormones is harmful and associated with an increased risk of cancer, strokes and other conditions. So called natural hormone replacement is somewhat safer. One can buy natural estrogen and progesterone creams of varying strengths. Some 'wild yam' creams do not contain progesterone, but merely a precursor. These are not as powerful as creams that contain progesterone.

Herbs such as black cohosh, don quai, chaste tree and GLA from primrose oil may also help balance female hormones. Other natural therapies such as massage, energy balancing, saunas and others may also be very helpful.

Surgically Or Chemically-induced Menopause

The information above applies as well to menopausal symptoms due to oophorectomy, radiation or chemotherapy. In every case, the adrenal glands should produce enough hormones to avoid hot flashes and other symptoms. Symptoms occur when the adrenals are depleted and the liver is unable to detoxify estrogen, causing higher than normal circulating estrogen in the blood.

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